

COVE HARBOR AND COVE POND
STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

(REVIEW OF REPORTS)

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ENGLAND DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WALTHAM, MASS.

September 1970

SYLLABUS

The Division Engineer finds that local interests are unwilling to provide the necessary local cooperation that would be required for navigation improvements consisting of an entrance channel from deep water in Cove Harbor and a small-boat lock in the existing dam at the entrance to Cove Pond (also known as Holly Pond). He therefore concludes that further study is not warranted and recommends no detailed study be made of Cove Harbor and Cove Pond, Connecticut at this time.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ENGLAND DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
424 TRAPELO ROAD
WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02154

IN REPLY REFER TO

NEDED-R

23 September 1970

SUBJECT: Survey (Review of Reports) Cove Harbor and Cove Pond,
Stamford, Connecticut

Chief of Engineers
ATTN: ENGCW-PD

AUTHORITY

1. This report is submitted in compliance with a resolution of the Committee on Public Works of the United States Senate, adopted 4 March 1957, which reads as follows:

"RESOLVED BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE, That the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, created under Section 3 of the River and Harbor Act, approved June 13, 1902, be, and is hereby requested to review the report of the Chief of Engineers on Cove Harbor and Cove Pond, Connecticut, transmitted to Congress on January 28, 1949, with a view to determining whether any modification of the recommendations contained therein is advisable at the present time."

2. A report of preliminary scope was assigned to the Division Engineer, New England Division, by 1st Indorsement dated 12 March 1957 from the Chief of Engineers. However, as the River and Harbor Act of 3 July 1958 eliminated the requirement for preliminary examinations, this letter-type survey report is submitted.

PURPOSE

3. The purpose of the study is to determine the possibility of Federal navigation improvements for recreational boating at Cove Harbor and Cove Pond (also known as Holly Pond) in accordance with the needs and desires of local interests.

DESCRIPTION

4. Cove Harbor is a tidal inlet with an area of 250 acres on the north shore of Long Island Sound in the city of Stamford, Fairfield County, Connecticut. The harbor is located 35 miles east of New York City and two miles east of Stamford Harbor. Cove Pond, with an area of 150 acres, lies just north of Cove Harbor at the mouth of the Noroton River which forms the boundary between the city of Stamford and the town of Darien. The entrance to the pond is closed by a rockfill dam constructed in 1796. It was initially used to store water for the generation of power to operate a grist mill and later by the Stamford Manufacturing Company. This company ceased operations many years ago. The depth of water in the pond was regulated by tide gates that were destroyed by the 1938 hurricane. In 1955, the city of Stamford acquired the neck of land at the west side of the entrance to the pond known as Cove Island for development of a city-owned recreational park. In conjunction with the park project, the city restored the tide gates in the dam but they are not functional. The top of the dam is approximately one foot below mean high water.

5. The approach to the harbor from Long Island Sound has a controlling depth of 7 feet and depths within the harbor range from 1 to 11 feet. On the east side of the harbor an area of 10 acres was dredged by a local development company for use by owners of shore property on Noroton Neck. Depths to 18 feet were reported in 1969. The harbor is protected on the north and west but is exposed to storms from the south through the southeast. The mean tide range in Cove Harbor is 7.2 feet, with a spring range of 8.3 feet. The locality is shown on U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey Charts Nos. 221 and 1213 and on the map accompanying this report.

6. Cove Harbor and Pond are adjacent to the industrial city of Stamford and to the residential community of Darien. In 1969, the populations of these communities were estimated to be 111,700 and 22,400, respectively. The area is serviced by the Penn Central Railroad, numerous motor common carriers, and a network of Federal, State and local roadways.

PRIOR REPORTS

7. The locality has been the subject of two previous reports, both of preliminary examination scope. The first, transmitted to Congress on 7 December 1912, was printed in House Document 122, 62d Congress, 3d Session. This report, which considered the advisability of deepening the entrance channel in Cove Harbor was found to be unfavorable to improvement at that time. The later report, dated 17 March 1947, considered the advisability of dredging Cove Harbor to permit small boats to enter and leave Cove (Holly) Pond at all times. After careful consideration, the Division Engineer concluded that further study on Cove Harbor was not warranted. The plan of improvement desired by local interests primarily concerned the elimination of pollution in Cove Pond and dredging the pond for the purpose of beautifying the area to make it a more desirable residential section. Therefore, he recommended that no further study be made at that time. The report was not published. Thus, there is no existing Federal navigation project for Cove Harbor and Pond.

DISCUSSION

8. A meeting was held with officials of the city of Stamford and the town of Darien on 13 March 1970. The meeting was arranged by the Mayor of Stamford to discuss the possibility of Federal participation in creating a pleasure boat harbor in Cove (Holly) Pond. The Mayor claimed that the pollution problem caused by residents along Noroton River which empties into the pond had been eliminated. He stated further that the only remaining source of pollution in the river is caused by one small firm which is going out of business. The desired plan of improvement presented at the meeting would provide for an entrance channel from deep water in Cove Harbor to the dam at the entrance to Cove (Holly) Pond where a small boat lock would be constructed for access into the pond. In addition, a 500-boat marina would be constructed by the city on the Stamford side of the pond. Although the Darien officials present at the meeting were not adverse to the Mayor's proposal, they felt that the residents and homeowners along the Darien shore would likely voice objections to such a development, citing noise and congestion resulting from the improvement, as their reasons.

9. The Mayor of Stamford expressed his hope for Corps' participation in the city's plan of development of the area for recreational boating. However, when informed of the necessary requirements of local cooperation for a Federal small-boat navigation project, including the "open to all on equal terms" clause, he objected strongly as the prime objective of the proposed improvement was that it be for exclusive use by residents of Stamford and Darien. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Mayor stated that he proposed to find a contractor to develop the area in exchange for rights to utilize all dredged materials for commercial purposes.

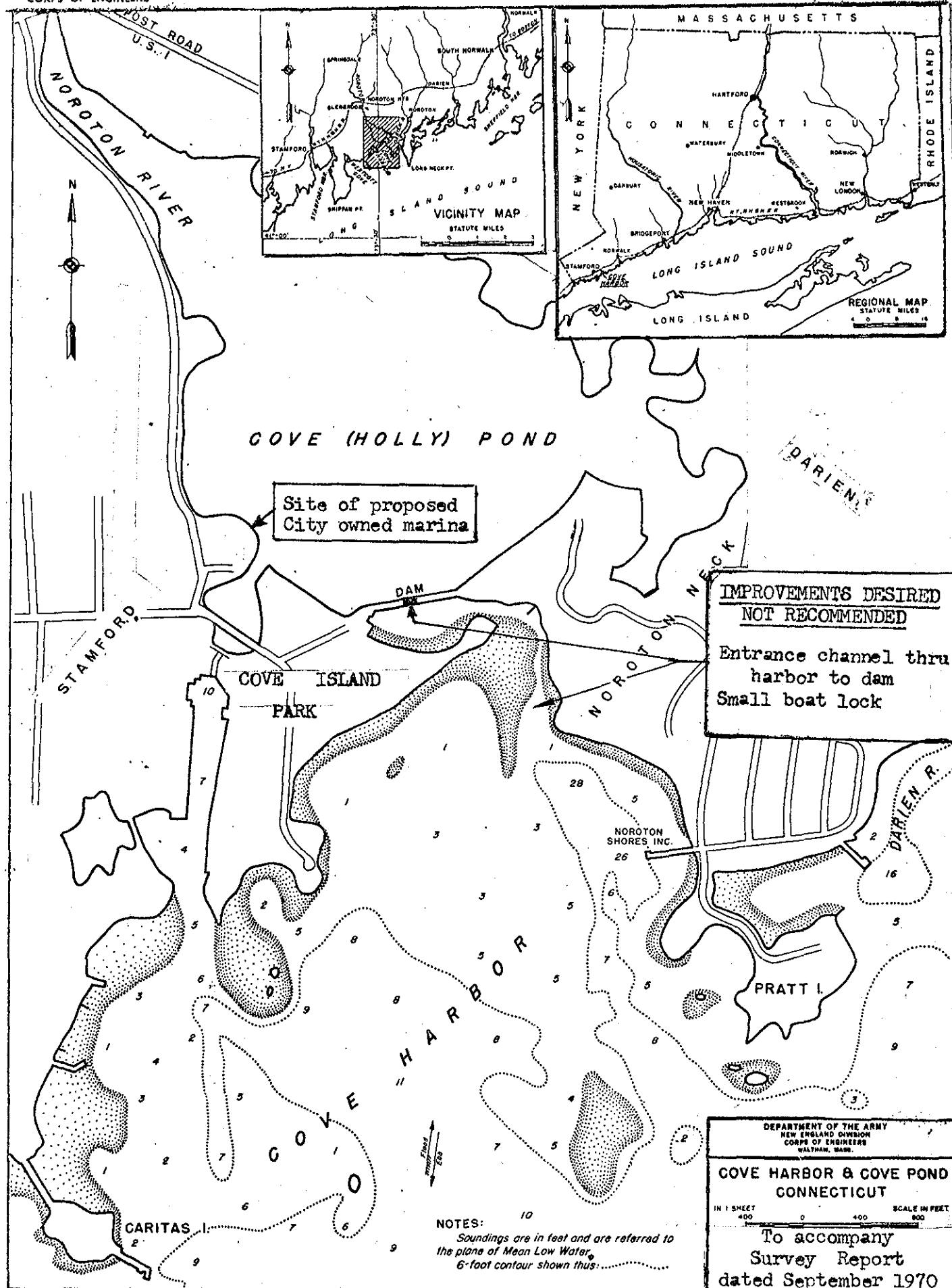
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10. As a result of the meeting with local officials, it has been concluded that further study of Cove Harbor and Pond, Connecticut, is not warranted at this time. Local interests have stated that they would not operate any improvements found justified which would be open to all on equal terms, a necessary requirement of local cooperation for Federal navigation projects.

11. In view of the unwillingness of the city of Stamford to meet the requirements of local cooperation for a justifiable improvement, the Division Engineer recommends that no detailed study be made of Cove Harbor and Pond at this time.

1 Incl
Map

FRANK P. BANE
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
Division Engineer



**IMPROVEMENTS DESIRED
NOT RECOMMENDED**

Entrance channel thru
harbor to dam
Small boat lock

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ENGLAND DIVISION
CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WALTHAM, MASS.

**COVE HARBOR & COVE POND
CONNECTICUT**

IN 1 SHEET 400 0 400 800 SCALE IN FEET

To accompany
Survey Report
dated September 1970

PLATE 1